

**CLARK COUNTY
CLEAN WATER COMMISSION
Meeting Notes**

Wednesday, May 3, 2006
6:30 – 8:30 P.M.
Mountain Valley Grange Hall
40107 NE 221st Avenue, Amboy

Clark County Clean Water Commission Members Present

Tim Crawford, Don Moe, Bill Owen, Patty Page, Art Stubbs, Ron Wilson

Clark County Clean Water Commission Members Absent

Robert Even, Susan Rasmussen, Virginia van Breemen

Clark County Staff

Trista Kobluskie, Earl Rowell

Public

Jim Malinowski, Thom McConathy

A quorum was achieved.

Call to Order

Introduction

The members of the Clark County Clean Water Commission, the public, and Clark County staff introduced themselves. The meeting was then called to order.

Mr. Rowell welcomed Mr. Don Moe, P.E., to the Commission.

Agenda and material review

The packet includes:

- 1) 5/3/06 Clean Water Commission Meeting Agenda
- 2) 4/5/06 Clean Water Commission Meeting Summary
- 3) 3/1/06 Clean Water Commission Meeting Notes with Mr. Owen's revisions
- 4) Letter reappointing Mr. Owen to the Commission from the BOCC
- 5) Clean Water Commission Bylaws (revised 3/01/2006)
- 6) Updated list of Clean Water Commission Members
- 7) Discussion Draft of the Clean Water Commission 2005 Annual Report to the BOCC
- 8) Clean Water Program Outreach and Events Calendar

Communications with the Public

Mr. Rowell indicated that Water Resources staff has been coordinating with other Phase I permittees on comments on the draft permit from Ecology.



Public Comments

Mr. McConathy wondered how efficient the volunteer monitoring program is. He recently attended a volunteer monitoring workshop given by The Columbia Riverkeeper, which he feels is establishing a more comprehensive, yet less expensive, volunteer monitoring program. He asked for additional information from Water Resources staff.

[Factual Note: Mr. Swanson later provided Mr. McConathy with additional information about the Water Resources Volunteer Monitoring program. For instance, the program supports several volunteer projects through the Monitoring Resource Center equipment lending library.]

Mr. McConathy complained that Code Enforcement has insufficiently responded to his calls regarding erosion control violations. He stated that he turned in 3-4 sites per week during the wet season, but does not see that quantity of enforcement actions, or even education actions, in the Code Enforcement monthly report to Water Resources. He indicated that much more enforcement is warranted. He indicated that the Clean Water Program is paying for more enforcement than is being delivered.

Mr. Stubbs responded that a community volunteer code enforcement program has been implemented. Mr. McConathy responded that code enforcement should be done by County staff, not by volunteers from the community.

Mr. Malinowski stated that he is a member of the ESA Task Force. He complained of lack of enforcement in the riparian zones. Recently, a property owner in the rural area moved a creek on his property with a backhoe and received only a slap on the wrist. Other property owners routinely create view corridors by clearing trees right down to a stream bank. These actions are direct violations of the Habitat Ordinance but are not well enforced by the County. Also, enforcement appears to not be uniform. Wealthy property owners seldom receive fines.

Mr. Owen asked the staff if Community Development has an oversight body similar to the Clean Water Commission. Mr. Rowell responded that the oversight for Community Development is the Auditor; he stated that the Clean Water Commission could ask the erosion control and stormwater code enforcement staff in Community Development to provide it with a detailed annual report.

Mr. Owen indicated that he would raise the question of enforcement of codes at the June meeting.

Mr. Malinowski asked the Commission to spearhead an effort to send an annual notice to streamside property owners detailing their rights and responsibilities regarding property management along a stream. This should include regulations from any relevant ordinance.

Ms. Page enthusiastically agreed with the idea. She stated that many new property owners have no idea what their rights and responsibilities are for controlling drainage. She indicated that specific information should be available on the Clark County web site, too.

Mr. Malinowski asked the Commission if it could address the issue of overdrafting the aquifer. He stated that lowering aquifer levels will inevitably lower stream flows. Mr. Owen responded that this issue is a water rights issue that cannot be addressed directly by the Commission. Mr. Rowell responded that some issues under consideration by the Commission could affect groundwater. For example, the Low Impact Development techniques the Commission and Water Resources staff are advocating will frequently use infiltration, which help to recharge groundwater. Mr. Malinowski asked the Commission to develop a recommendation to Clark Public Utilities District to draw water exclusively from deep sources, from well

fields near the Columbia River, for example, and to extend water utility service to the rural areas to reduce the number of shallow-drawing private wells.

Mr. Owen suggested that the Commission could hear a presentation from the PUD. Mr. Rowell reminded that Commission that any recommendation would be directed to the Board of County Commissioners.

Old Business

2005 Annual Report Discussion Draft

Mr. Owen will take comments from the Commissioners until May 17th. He will submit the final draft to Clark County staff on May 18th for final review and proofing. The final document will be available at the June meeting.

Mr. Rowell stated that the Board of County Commissioners has confirmed the date of Wednesday, June 21 from 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. for a work session for the Clean Water Commission to present its Annual Report.

Mr. Owen noted that page 2 needs more input, possibly from Mr. Even.

The group discussed whether or not to leave in the bulleted brief written public comments on page 6.

2006 Discussion Topics

Mr. Owen plans to review the list of discussion topics at least every other meeting in order to track the Commission's progress.

Participate in Selection and Ranking of Capital Improvements:

Mr. Crawford stated that most members of the group had attended the first meeting of the Stormwater Capital Improvement Project Involvement Team (SCIPIT) in April. The process is in its beginning stages, and will conclude in August.

The group discussed the extent to which projects identified in the Legacy Salmon Creek plan were included. They were included where feasible and where appropriate to stormwater control (as opposed to flood control).

Examine Water Resources Education & Outreach Program:

Ms. Page stated that the Education Subcommittee met again with Mrs. Stienbarger of Water Resources. They also attended the awards ceremony for the Children's Billboard Art Contest.

Mr. McConathy indicated that the upcoming NPDES permit will require education to all types of audiences, including adults. Ms. Page indicated her interest in educating property owners.

Promote Low Impact Development:

Mr. Owen stated that county staff must communicate with the Board of County Commissioners to get buy-in before any more progress can be made. He stated that the best window of opportunity as identified in a conversation with the Building Industry Association is early summer.

Mr. Rowell stated that he met with Sue Stepan, the new Manager of Development Engineering in Community Development, to discuss LID concepts.

Research Stormwater Filter Vaults and other Stormwater Facilities:

Mr. Owen asked if Mr. Moe would like to join Mr. Wilson in researching filter vaults. Mr. Moe agreed. Mr. Rowell recommended that the group contact Dr. Gary Minton of the University of Washington to learn more about the efficacy of filter vault and other stormwater treatment systems. Mr. Owen stated that they would revisit the topic in July.

Investigate the Impact of Septic Tanks:

Mr. Owen requested that Mr. Rowell invite both a staff member from the Health Department and a staff member from the Clark Regional Wastewater District to either the June or July meeting. Mr. McConathy noted that a person from Portland could talk about issues in converting from septic to public sewer in the eastern part of Multnomah County. Mr. Owen stated that he could speak knowledgeably on that topic.

New Business

2007-08 Budget

Mr. Rowell stated that he and the program's coordinators are currently writing narrative performance measures for each element of the program. The next step will be to begin creating the overall biennial budget. Monitoring and reporting will likely constitute a larger portion of the budget for the next biennium because it appears that the new NPDES permit will require significant increases in those activities.

Mr. Owen requested that staff forward draft or proposed budget numbers to the Clean Water Commission electronically as soon as the documents are available. During the last budget cycle, the process progressed so quickly that the Commission had little opportunity to thoroughly review and comment on the proposed budget before it was submitted to the BOCC.

Mr. McConathy requested to be included.

Orientation Packet for New Commissioners

Ms. Page asked that a packet of relevant materials be given to each new Commissioner *prior* to his or her orientation session with Mr. Rowell. Suggestions from Ms. Page and the group include:

- County flow chart
- Commission Bylaws
- One or two past Annual Reports
- Role of the Clean Water Commission
- Invitations to ride-along sessions with various program staff, including Community Development and Operations staff
- A checklist of items to review with Mr. Rowell or others
- A contact list for other Commissioners that includes information about their backgrounds

Mr. Owen suggested highlighting a few of the most important documents.

Mr. McConathy suggested implementing a mentor system, in which an existing Commissioner meets socially with the new Commissioner prior to the first meeting for the new member. Mr. Crawford and Mr. Wilson agreed. The group discussed meeting more often outside the confines of the official meetings.

Open Forum for Commissioners

Mr. Owen stated that he intends to include an open forum segment at each meeting of the Clean Water Commissioners in order to encourage Commissioners to voice ideas about topic not on the Agenda.

Mr. McConathy suggested that the Commission as CVTV to televise its monthly meetings. Mr. Owen recalled that CVTV taped one meeting in the past.

Ms. Page stated that the meetings, especially when held out in the community, should be better publicized. She did not find any notices of the meeting in any of the local papers. Mr. Rowell indicated that past experience shows that advertising, including posting paid advertisements and radio ads, seldom increased public attendance. Mr. Malinowski suggested asking the building managers how best to reach an audience for that local area.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 P.M.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Clean Water Commission will be held on Wednesday, June 7, 2006 from 6:30 P.M. – 8:30 P.M. The location is the Public Works Operations Conference Room B-1, 4700 NE 78th Street, Vancouver.

Respectfully Submitted,
Trista Kobluskie

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